

Is Abortion Ever Equal to Murder?

Memo/Reply From

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

TO:

Howard Helt
Cy Levithol.

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you op-ed

*I enjoyed it - it was a
good statement.*

JL

5/24/50

X... 3

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pregnant woman. Some women choose to bear, for example, a deformed or diseased infant, but others not. Most will likely wish to terminate pregnancies that result from incest.

pregnancies beyond three months, the woman considering abortion might turn for advice to groups far to the multidisciplinary committees that now exist in many hospitals to help advise patients on ethical matters.

The assertion that life begins at conception can be made only on religious, not medical, grounds. No one can prove that the soul does not enter the egg with the DNA from the sperm. However, just as life ends at brain death, so a strong case can be made that human awareness and consciousness emerge only when the fetus is well on the way to full development. Since the question of when life occurs cannot now be answered by science, religion or under our Constitution, we believe that for abortion decisions in the latter part of pregnancy, the courts should give the states leeway to set guidelines. □

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